

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

**Listing of claims**

Claim 1 (Cancelled).

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1] 29 wherein the maximum height of the inclined upper guideway above ground level is greater than the length of the reciprocating means.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1] 29 wherein the upper and lower guideways are substantially parallel.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1] 29 wherein the upper and lower guideways lie in a plane which is generally normal to the ground.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1,] 29 wherein the upper and lower guideways lie in a plane which is inclined to the ground.

Claim 6 (Cancelled).

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1] 29 wherein the first upstanding stable support is one of a wall and a pole and wherein the second upstanding stable support is one of a wall and a pole.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [6,] 29 wherein the lower guideway is adjustably engaged to the stable support.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1,] 29 wherein the reciprocating means comprises one or more upstanding lines connected to the upper and lower guideways.

Claim 10 (Previously Amended): Apparatus according to claim 9 wherein the reciprocating means comprises one upstanding line connected to the upper guideway and another associated upstanding line connected to the lower guideway.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1,] 29 wherein the reciprocating means is connected to the upper and lower guideways ~~means~~ through a slide.

Claim 12 (Original): Apparatus according to claim 11 wherein the slide comprises a hinged clip, ring, rope slide or adjustable loop.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1,] 29 wherein the upper and lower guideways or the reciprocating means are made of a low friction material.

Claim 14 (Previously Amended): Apparatus according to claim 13 wherein the upper and lower guideways or the reciprocating means are made of plastics covered cord or wire.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1,] 29 wherein the upper and lower guideways and the reciprocating means are made from the same material.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1,] 29 wherein the upper and lower guideways are made of a substantially rigid material.

Claim 17 (Previously Amended): Apparatus according to claim 16 wherein the upper or lower guideway comprises a plastics track which is capable of receiving a runner to which the reciprocating means is connected.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1,] 29 wherein the ball can be connected at any point along the reciprocating means.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1,] 29 wherein the ball is one of a tennis ball, a baseball, a rounders ball, a cricket ball, a hockey ball, and a golf ball.

Claims 20-27 (Cancelled).

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): Apparatus according to claim [1,] 29 further comprising a guide rope and a peg, wherein one end of the guide rope is attached to the top of one of the first and second upstanding stable supports and the other end is attached to the peg and wherein the peg is connected to the ground.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended): ~~Apparatus according to claim 1,~~ Apparatus for use in playing and practicing ball games comprising a generally inclined upper guideway, a generally inclined or horizontal lower guideway, substantially inelastic reciprocating means connected to and freely moveable along said upper and lower guideways, a ball connected to said reciprocating means, a first upstanding stable support connected to the first end of the upper and lower guideways, and a second, spaced apart, upstanding stable support connected to the second end of the upper and lower guideways, wherein the lower guideway between the first and second upstanding stable supports is slack when the ball is at rest.

Claim 30 (Original): Apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the portion of the one or more upstanding lines between the ball and the lower guideway is slack when the ball is at rest.

Claim 31 (Cancelled).

Claim 32 (Currently Amended): Apparatus for use in playing and practicing ball games comprising a generally inclined upper guideway with first and second ends, a generally inclined or horizontal lower guideway with first and second ends, substantially inelastic reciprocating means connected to and freely moveable along said upper and lower guideways, a ball connected to said reciprocating means, ~~and at least one upstanding stable~~

~~support a pole~~ connected to the first ends of the upper and lower guideways, and a pole or a wall connected to the second ends of the upper and lower guideways, wherein the lower guideway is slack when the ball is at rest.

Claim 33 (Original): Apparatus according to claim 32, wherein the reciprocating means comprises a first upstanding line connected to the upper guideway and the ball and a second upstanding line connected to the ball and the lower guideway, wherein the lower upstanding line is slack when the ball is at rest.

Claim 34 (Currently Amended): Apparatus for use in playing and practicing ball games comprising a slanted upper guideway with first and second ends, a generally horizontal lower guideway with first and second ends, substantially inelastic reciprocating means connected to and freely moveable along said upper and lower guideways, a ball connected to said reciprocating means, ~~and at least one upstanding stable support~~ a pole connected to the first ends of the upper and lower guideways, and a pole or a wall connected to the second ends of the upper and lower guideways.

Claim 35 (Original): Apparatus according to claim 34, wherein the reciprocating means comprises a first upstanding line connected to the upper guideway and the ball and a second upstanding line connected to the ball and the lower guideway, wherein the lower upstanding line is slack when the ball is at rest.

Claim 36 (New): Apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the maximum height of the slanted upper guideway above ground level is greater than the length of the reciprocating means.

Claim 37 (New): Apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the upper and lower guideways lie in a plane which is generally normal to the ground.

Claim 38 (New): Apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the upper and lower guideways lie in a plane which is inclined to the ground.

Claim 39 (New): Apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the first end of the lower guideway is adjustably engaged relative to the pole.

Claim 40 (New): Apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the reciprocating means comprises a first upstanding line portion connected to the ball and to the upper guideway and a second upstanding line portion connected to the ball and to the lower guideway.

Claim 41 (New): Apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the reciprocating means is connected to the upper and lower guideways by a slide.

Claim 42 (New): Apparatus according to claim 41 wherein the slide comprises a hinged clip, ring, rope slide or adjustable loop.

Claim 43 (New): Apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the upper and lower guideways or the reciprocating means are made of a low friction material.

Claim 44 (New): Apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the upper and lower guideways or the reciprocating means are made of plastics covered cord or wire.

Claim 45 (New): Apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the upper and lower guideways and the reciprocating means are made from the same material.

Claim 46 (New): Apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the upper and lower guideways are made of a substantially rigid material.

Claim 47 (New): Apparatus according to claim 46 wherein the upper or lower guideway comprises a plastics track which is capable of receiving a runner to which the reciprocating means is connected.

Claim 48 (New): Apparatus according to claim 47 wherein the ball can be connected at any point along the reciprocating means.